

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Heys Lane, Heywood, Lancashire, OL10 3RD

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement has risen strongly since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress from their different starting points and achieve well by the end of Year 6.
- Children get off to a good start in Reception class and make good progress due to the high quality care and support they receive.
- Most teaching is good and school records show that some is outstanding. Learning is well-planned and exciting tasks enthuse and interest pupils so that they are eager to learn.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive and, as a result, pupils work hard and want to do well.
- The bright and vibrant displays around school and in all classrooms celebrate the high quality work pupils produce and show the wide range of subjects they cover.
- Effective leadership has made considerable improvements in teaching, achievement and attendance. The headteacher and senior leaders provide inspired leadership and they have created a united team of staff.
- Governors are very well informed and have contributed much expertise to the improvement of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to increase progress rates further. In some lessons, pupils are not clear about what they have to do, work is too easy and additional adults are not always used to best effect.
- Targets for improvement set for some pupils are not always challenging enough and are not always matched to the targets set for teachers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They saw 16 part-lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) but parent views were collected by speaking to parents as they brought their children to school and through other survey information collected by the school.
- Questionnaire responses from 24 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports following lesson observations, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maria McGarry

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises of one Reception class.
- There is an on-site breakfast club for pupils, which is managed by the school.
- Almost all pupils are White British and speak English as their home language.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from families with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that more is outstanding and progress continues to accelerate by making sure that:
 - teachers always explain tasks clearly so that pupils know exactly what they have to do
 - tasks are always planned to stretch and challenge all pupils, especially the most able, so that more reach the higher levels
 - additional adults are used effectively at all times during lessons to support learning.
- Build on the effectiveness of leadership and management so that they are outstanding by raising expectations for all pupils to make good or outstanding progress and reflecting this precisely in teachers' annual targets.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding which are well below those expected for their age in all areas. Good quality teaching and care help children to make good progress. As a result standards are rising and children are now reaching a good level of development across the main areas of learning on entry to Year 1.
- Progress in Year 1 and 2 is good and continuing to accelerate. While standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are still below average, they are rising impressively. The school's own records show that pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to reach standards that are closer to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Progress across Years 3 to 6 is also good. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average and higher than at the time of the previous inspection in all subjects. Inspection evidence indicates they are continuing to rise. The school's own assessment information and work sampled in pupils' books confirm that all groups of pupils achieve well, including the most able. However, not enough reach the higher levels at the end of Year 2 or Year 6, which is the reason why achievement is judged as good.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with very low levels of reading skills but make good progress due to the effective teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and additional individual help. Their progress accelerates through Reception and Year 1, and results in the Year 1 phonics reading check are above average. Reading is strongly promoted across the school and older pupils continue to read regularly and develop good reading habits, for example, reading at bedtime.
- Progress in mathematics is outstanding in Key Stage 1 and stronger than in reading and writing across the school. This is due to at least consistently good teaching and strong leadership in this subject. The 'ice-cream challenge' has led to high levels of motivation amongst pupils in all classes and has had a significant impact on pupils' use of mental calculation.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress because of the support they receive both within and outside lessons. This support includes specialist teaching from outside agencies and extra time with teaching assistants and other volunteers. Input focuses on areas which pupils struggle with, including communication. This practice helps them to keep up with their classmates, demonstrating the school's active promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress along with others in their classes. This funding is used well to provide additional teaching support in literacy and numeracy, counselling support to those with emotional needs, and to purchase additional resources to help pupils learn more rapidly. School leaders systematically check and follow the progress of these pupils, and findings show that the gap between their attainment and that of others in the school is closing rapidly in both English and mathematics. Pupils eligible for funding who left the school in Year 6 in 2013 were approximately four terms behind their classmates in reading and mathematics but five terms behind in writing. However, current Year 6 pupils are less than two terms behind in reading and mathematics and three terms behind in writing.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and, as a result, all groups now make good progress. Most lessons are good and school records show there are some which are outstanding. In all classes, relationships between adults and pupils are positive and, as a result, pupils work hard and make good progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan well-thought-out lessons. Questioning is used effectively to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and to make pupils think hard. Lessons also build well on what pupils have learned previously.

- At its best, lively and imaginative strategies capture pupils' imagination and develop their thinking. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils came up with alternative words for common adjectives and used some of their ideas to describe how a character felt, having watched a short video clip. All pupils were engrossed and concentration levels were extremely high. As a result progress in this lesson was rapid.
- Teaching in the Reception class is good and the bright and stimulating learning environment is used well to support children's early skills, both indoors and outdoors. Exciting activities are planned to make sure all children explore and develop their ideas. For example, the use of music and role play helped pupils brilliantly describe the features of the '*Gruffalo*'. All adults provide appropriate support and ask lots of questions to encourage the development of communication.
- Where learning is not as strong, work is not clearly explained so pupils are unsure about what they have to do and so make mistakes. Sometimes, the work set is not always at the right level and does not present high enough levels of challenge, especially for the most able. On occasion, the most able find the work too easy and it does not extend their learning. This limits their progress and too few reach the higher levels of which they are capable.
- Teaching assistants form a strong partnership with teachers. They provide valuable additional support both inside lessons and to individual pupils who are struggling. However, in some lessons, the additional support available is not always maximised, especially at the start or end of lessons, as adults observe teaching rather than work with pupils.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and helpful and positive comments are added. Pupils are told how they can improve their work and often pupils themselves reflect on how well they feel they have achieved and add their own comments. Homework is also set regularly and marked thoroughly. The 'homework heroes' scheme has resulted in increased numbers of pupils completing their homework due to the incentives offered.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and school. When asked by inspectors what the best thing about school was, one pupil summed it up in one word, 'Everything!' In most lessons, pupils show great enthusiasm and excitement about their learning. For example, children in the Reception class were challenged to work out how animals trapped in ice could escape. This presented lots of rich language use and discussion with high levels of concentration and motivation.
- Pupils behave responsibly around the school. They are polite and respectful to adults, work well together in lessons and play happily together at break times. Pupils understand the school rules and know the sanctions and rewards in place. Parents and pupils who expressed their views agree that behaviour is good. This is also evidenced in school records. Where incidents do occur, these are dealt with effectively and appropriate actions taken.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure that pupils are safe in school. Entry to the premises is well managed and staff recruited are rigorously checked. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and have specialist instruction from agencies such as Child Line.
- Pupils are very clear that there are no bullies at St Margaret's and they have a good level of understanding about different forms of bullying, including physical, verbal and cyber bullying.
- The school works exceptionally well to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and their families facing challenging circumstances. This involves a close team, including a school counsellor, which liaises between home and school. They provide excellent support to pupils in school and hard to reach families, promoting good attendance and going the extra mile to make sure pupils are safe.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly promoted due to the close partnership the school has with its local church. This provides a valuable pastoral link for pupils and their families. Regular assemblies, visits to church and reflection time, all make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Visits to other places of worship and

learning about different religions, together with learning French and German, make sure that pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of other cultures and practices.

- The breakfast club provides a good start to the school day. It is a safe, calm environment and a useful resource for parents. The food and activities provided make sure pupils are well prepared for their daily lessons.
- Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their above-average attendance. Systems in place are effective in checking on and following up any pupils who are persistently absent.

The leadership and management are good

- Effective leadership has successfully improved teaching and raised achievement and attendance since the previous inspection. The headteacher is a dedicated leader who knows the school well. She has worked tirelessly with her staff to ensure that standards rise. She is ably supported by a very effective deputy headteacher and wider leadership team, including middle leaders. Together they have created a united team of staff whose morale is high.
- Regular and rigorous checks are made on the quality of teaching by all leaders. Coaching and support, together with both internal and external training, have all brought about improvements to the quality of teaching.
- The school's own self-evaluation of its strengths and areas for improvement is accurate. Detailed and comprehensive action plans are rigorously carried through so leaders can check what has been successful and what should be further developed. This good practice has led to significant improvements in reading, writing and mathematics across the school.
- Annual targets are set for teachers based on the school's priorities and linked to pupils' progress. Pay increases are only awarded where teachers can demonstrate that they have met the targets set and that pupils are reaching the levels expected. However, on occasion, teachers' targets are not challenging or precise enough to make sure that all pupils, particularly the most able, make consistently good progress, and leaders acknowledge that they need to raise expectations.
- The curriculum and exciting topics, such as 'Digging up the past' to mark the school's 50th anniversary helps promote pupils' literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills well. Additional learning opportunities including visits, visitors and clubs also provide pupils with rich and memorable experiences.
- Leaders are using the new primary sports funding provided by the government, to help staff plan and deliver physical education lessons more effectively and improve pupils' physical well-being. This has helped improve staff confidence and provide sustainability of these skills in the future. There is also greater attendance at after-school sports clubs and pupils are more aware of the benefits to their health.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school since the previous inspection and has helped improve the quality of teaching and leadership. The local authority rightly has confidence in the school's leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a detailed knowledge of the school and provide a good balance of challenge and support to leaders. They regularly visit the school and receive a wide range of comprehensive information. As a result they have an excellent understanding of how well the school is doing compared to other schools nationally. They competently analyse data on pupils' progress and attainment, including on the progress made by all groups of pupils. For example, they know how the pupil premium is used and the impact this is having on closing the attainment gaps between eligible pupils and others in the school. Governors know what the quality of teaching is across the school. Appointed governors set targets for the headteacher and check that pay increases for teachers and leaders are linked to pupils making good progress. All governors have added to their skills through recent training and ensure that they fulfil their statutory duties, including safeguarding, which meets requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105815
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	430987

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laura Heslin
Headteacher	Maxine Beresford
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2012
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